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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ADANA 0258

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY,  
OCTOBER 3, 2003

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for October 3, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. Turkiye, Vakit / About 25 people who have accounts at Imarbank Adana Branch gathered in front of the bank and demanded the immediate payment of their money.

3. Turkiye, Sabah Guney / Cukurova Journalists' Association announced that they disapprove of the reported comment "I'm very pleased with the attack towards newspaper reporter Kemal Kucuk, because he deserved it," attributed to Umit Ozgumus, Adana Chamber of Industry Head.

4. Yeni Safak / In Guroymak, Bitlis province, 11 cattle reportedly were killed by anthrax in a week. Villagers are asking for help and guidance on how to treat the dead animals.

5. Yeni Safak / In Ogunduk, Idil, Sirnak province, Pastor Melke Tok praised AK Party MP Abdullah Veli Seyda for his visit to their village. Tok wanted financial aid for the restoration of the village church and for a football field in the village area.

6. Ozgur Gundem / In Caldiran, Van province 14-year-old illegal trader Zahir Yilmaz was shot dead by soldiers following the soldiers' call for surrender. When found by the soldiers, Yilmaz was illegally trading fuel with Seyfettin Kaya. Allegedly Kaya reported that Yilmaz had already surrendered when soldiers shot him.

7. Ozgur Gundem / Van Governor Hikmet Tan, during his visit to Geziyurt and Parmakkapi villages, addressed the villagers and asked them to call all their families back to their villages. (Editor's Note: These villages had been evacuated due to the PKK/KADEK problem in 1996. Villagers started to return to their villages in 2003).

8. Ozgur Gundem / In Siirt, 200 people protested against the prison conditions of Abdullah Ocalan. Police warned the people to end the meeting. After the warning group threw stones at the police, and during the ensuing clash, a police officer was injured.

9. Radikal, Sabah / Armenian Patriarch Mesrop II accused Turkish airlines (THY) personnel of not letting him sit next to his assistant in the Turkish Airlines Van flight. Patriarch refused to sit separate from his assistant and didn't get on the plane. Patriarch stated that somebody might be trying to prevent his visit to Akdamar Church in Van. According to THY, Patriarch was 10 minutes late for the check-in and they gave his seat to a passenger on the waiting list, but they offered him another seat due to the respect for his position, which had to be separate from his assistant. THY reported that they also offered him seats on 8:50 flight to Van, but the Patriarch refused both offers.  
REID